/Chinese, Chinese Moslems and Sedentary Tibetans/

cities and the great waterways of China, and had traversed her wide plains by the iron track at speed which seemed fabulous to the owners of these little shops. The static inhabitants saw them come, heard them talk, watched them go, but failed to understand the matters of which they spoke, for, to them everything which they had never seen was unreal, vague, remote and seemed to bear no relation to daily life. Enough for them that today they had sold three boxes of matches, two packets of cigarettes and handful of salt. They cared little for travellers' tales and probably believed none of them....

The restless soldiers of the garrison rushed to and from the large town, but the old inhabitants cared for none of these things, and when the fortress gates were closed each night they put up the shutters of the little shops and crept under miserable coverlets to lie on the mud kangs, fill their opium pipes and escape into the land of illusion and dreams, which was the only wider horizon that they knew." (pp. 17-20).

While she was visiting in Tun-huang Miss Cable observed: "The people of Tunwhang (Tun-huang) viewed themselves as the elite of Gobi land, and were abnormally proud of their oasis. They had plenty of money to spend and opened their markets freely to goods from other places, but prided themselves on being a self-supporting community, not only in respect of food, but also in regard to brides and bridegrooms, and they did not approve of marriages arranged between their own children and those of other towns." (ibid.) The people in this district were very conservative. "One sign of its deep-seated conservatism," observed Miss Cable, "was the backward system of money exchange which it retained. Long after the silver dollar had become the common basis of coinage on the main road, Tunhwang businessmen looked askance at it, and preferred the shoe of silver which was chipped down, weighed up and exchanged for copper coinage. Here again Tunhwang set its standard by allowing one hundred worn and valueless cash to be introduced into each string of a thousand. It became therefore worthwhile to collect these useless copers in other towns, cart them to Tunhwang and dispose of them there. When the reluctance to admit the silver dollar was finally overcome, merchants still discriminated between different issues and refused one or the other according to fancy. The coin stamped with the dragon was depreciated in favor of one designated as the 'standing man' which was Hongkong currency. The dollar bearing the head of Yuan Shih-kai found favor, and for some reason the third-year issue was more highly valued than any other, but when a new coin stamped with the head of Sun Yat-sen appeared, this Gobi town absolutely refused to recognize it because the new president's effigy was small and unimpressive. No other explanation was offered than the words 'The head seems small', but no one would use it.

361 over their shoulders, like the togas of an ancient Roman. Defiant-
631 looking Tibetan horsemen, their long guns with meter-long forked supports on their backs, ride through the streets on strong ponies, often bargaining haughtily from their saddles with the shop owners. This outer city or suburb is also surrounded by an earth wall with gates, for Kue de is not very safe. A small theft or robbery is the
674 order of the day, in spite of the fact that there are only about 400
432 families (2,000-3,000 inhabitants) living in the city. An incident that happened while I was there best illustrates the conditions. A Tibetan yeoman, son of a chief, of one of the Lutsang /265/ tribes in the southern part of the city, had sold a horse to a Chinese merchant. But hardly had the deal been closed when a rumor arose that the Tibetan had stolen the horse from a neighboring tribe. Now in order to pose, not as a common thief, but as a grandseigneur who would not let such a fatal accusation rest upon himself, and also to avoid conjuring up political difficulties for his entire tribe, our Tibetan was forced to return the stolen horse to its former owner, a Tibetan. For, just as was the case during the period of our robber barons, the Tibetans lay great stress on good manners and reputation. So the young man goes to the Chinese in order to buy back the horse. In his distress, he even offers slightly more than he got for it. But the Chinese is merciless. He will not under any circumstances cancel the bargain. Of course, the Tibetan cannot offer him so very much because he stole the horse in order to recoup his finances. What does a Tibetan do in such a dilemma? The next day as the Chinese is leading his horse out from its stable, the Tibetan knocks him down, swings himself onto the horse and disappears into the steppes, never to be seen again. His friends bring the animal to the owner from whom it was first stolen. Honor has been restored. A Chinaman does not count here.

631 On the morning after our arrival I went first to the ör fu, the ting, in the interior of the city. At the gate of his yamen I was received with a salute of guns, a great honor in China, for which I was indebted to the amban and which implied the wish that I should not go into the Ts'ao ti from here.

The yamen building was in a surprisingly dilapidated condition; the town is very unpopular among the officials. None of them stays more than a year and so no one has the offices and living quarters put into shape. When it rains only a few rooms are weather-proof. Even in the guest room large pieces of wall paper hang down from the ceiling. Through the holes one could see the